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(54) ARTICLE MANAGEMENT DEVICE, ARTICLE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, AND COMPUTER-READABLE STORAGE MEDIUM

(57) According to one embodiment, an article management device includes a receiver, a processor, and a transmitter. The receiver is configured to receive article measurement information. The processor is configured to select a first divergence control signal or a second divergence control signal based on the article measurement information, the first divergence control signal being for forwarding the article to a sorter configured to sort the article according to sorting destination information corresponding to the article, the second divergence control signal being for forwarding the article to a carrier. The transmitter is configured to transmit the first or the second divergence control signal to a diverger configured to forward the article toward the sorter or the carrier.

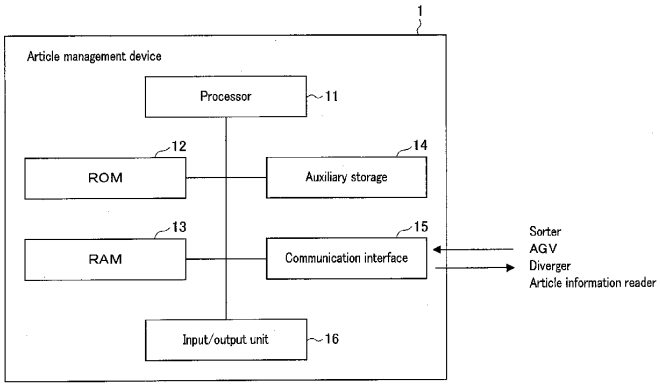

FIG. 2

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PARTIAL EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

under Rule 62a and/or 63 of the European Patent Convention. This report shall be considered, for the purposes of subsequent proceedings, as the European search report

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DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
Y	DE 10 2015 116741 A1 (DEUTSCHE POST AG [DE]) 6 April 2017 (2017-04-06) * paragraph [0076]; figure 1 *	1-10	INV. B07C5/36 B07C1/10
Y	DE 10 2011 080096 A1 (SIEMENS AG [DE]) 31 January 2013 (2013-01-31) * figures *	1-10	
A	WO 2018/115611 A1 (SOLYSTIC [FR]) 28 June 2018 (2018-06-28) * figures *	1-10	

TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)

B07C

INCOMPLETE SEARCH

The Search Division considers that the present application, or one or more of its claims, does/do not comply with the EPC so that only a partial search (R.62a, 63) has been carried out.

Claims searched completely :

Claims searched incompletely :

Claims not searched :

Reason for the limitation of the search:

see sheet C

Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner
Munich	15 September 2020	Wich, Roland

CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS

X : particularly relevant if taken alone
Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category
A : technological background
O : non-written disclosure
P : intermediate document

T : theory or principle underlying the invention
E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date
D : document cited in the application
L : document cited for other reasons

& : member of the same patent family, corresponding document

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INCOMPLETE SEARCH
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Claim(s) searched incompletely:
1-10

Reason for the limitation of the search:

The following invitation under Rule 63(1) EPC was issued on 10.06.2020 :
The application comprises two independent claims - claim 1 directed to an article management device, and claim 10 directed to a storage medium.
Claim 1 reads :
1. An article management device comprising:
a receiver configured to receive article measurement information acquired from measuring an article;
a processor configured to select a first divergence control signal or a second divergence control signal based on the article measurement information, the first divergence control signal being for forwarding the article to a sorter configured to sort the article according to sorting destination information corresponding to the article, the second divergence control signal being for forwarding the article to a carrier configured to carry the article according to a carrier control signal; and
a transmitter configured to transmit the first or the second divergence control signal to a diverger configured to forward the article toward the sorter or the carrier.
Claim 10 reads :
10. A non-transitory computer-readable storage medium storing a program for causing a computer to:
select a first divergence control signal or a second divergence control signal based on article measurement information acquired from measuring an article, the first divergence control signal being for forwarding the article to a sorter configured to sort the article according to sorting destination information corresponding to the article, the second divergence control signal being for forwarding the article to a carrier configured to carry the article according to a carrier control signal; and
transmit the first or the second divergence control signal to a diverger configured to forward the article toward the sorter or the carrier.
Both claims comprise references to entities outside of the scope of the respective device / medium (highlighted in bold letters).
The applicant is invited to indicate to indicate the scope of search to be carried out under Rule 63 EPC for both independent claims.
The applicant is further invited to refer his arguments to the Guidelines F-IV-3.9, and which sub-section is to be applied for interpretation and for search, and which limitation should be applied, in particular as for section 3.9.1. the medium would not comprise any technical features apart from selecting a signal and transmitting the signal, whilst for section 3.9.2. the article measurement, the sorter, the sorting information, sorter, carrier and diverger are presently not limiting the scope of the claim. Similar issues under Article 84 EPC exist for independent claim 1.
By reply of 06.08.2020 the applicant replied that claim 1 should be construed such that the actions that are performed on the articles are meant to be encompassed by the claimed subject-matter, i.e. measuring the article, diverging the articles according to the signal and sorting or carrying the article to the carrier destination.
Claim1 should be construed in a similar manner as claim 1, the claimed

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subject matter then falling under the category of section 3.9.2.
The seach thus has been performed takeing into consideration these submissions.
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ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO. EP 20 15 0671

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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15-09-2020

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For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82